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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0331
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SECRET AMMAN 6324

State Dept. review completed

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, JO, SY, IS
SUBJECT: MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY

MORI C03337778

REF: STATE 252146

1. WHEN I DELIVERED SECRETARY'S MESSAGE TO PM RIFAI TODAY, HE REFERRED TO REPORTED ISRAELI TROOP CONCENTRATIONS ON JORDAN'S BORDER AND COMMENTED THAT HE SEEMED TO BE ONLY ONE AMONG JORDAN'S LEADERS WHO DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ISRAEL WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK JORDAN.

2. RIFAI ADDED THAT HE WAS ALSO AMONG VERY FEW WHO DID NOT BELIEVE THAT SYRIA WOULD RESUME HOSTILITIES ON SYRIAN-ISRAELI FRONT WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS. HE SAID HIS TALK WITH ASAD ON DECEMBER 26 IN DAMASCUS HAD CONVINCED HIM THAT SYRIA WAS NOT CONTEMPLATING RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

3. COMMENT:

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I SUSPECT THAT DURING HIS TALK WITH ASAD, RIFAI MIGHT HAVE GIVEN SOME ASSURANCES THAT JORDANIAN TROOPS WOULD REMAIN IN SYRIA. FACT THAT HE WAS OVERRULED ON THIS POINT HAS RESULTED IN LOSS OF FACE AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO MAINTAIN WORKING RELATIONS WITH ASAD ON OTHER ISSUES, INCLUDING SYRIA'S PARTICIPATION IN GENEVA CONFERENCE. GRAHAM

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